

Claim 4, line 4, before "side" insert --one--.

Claim 7, line 2, after "one" insert --said--;

line 2, cancel "having an interior";

line 3, before "hinged" inset --one said --.

line 3, before "latch" insert --said--.

Claim 10, line 3, before "side" insert --one--.

Claim 12, line 2, before "side" insert --one--.

Claim 24, line 2, change "components" to read --component--;

line 3, cancel "at least one compartment".

Claim 25, line 6, after "box" insert --having an opening

C3 therein--;

line 10, after "box" insert --through said

C4 opening--.

Claim 35, amend to read as follows:

35. (Amended) A hidden storage system for a vehicle having a conventional bed without substantially altering an external appearance of side panels of the conventional bed compared to an external appearance of an identical ~~conventional~~ bed without the hidden storage system, said conventional bed comprising [of] a floor section, a front wall section, two side panel sections, and a [tail gate] tailgate section, with all sections being of substantially the same height, and being adapted to be mounted on wheels, said storage system comprising:

a storage box having an opening mounted on at least one side of said conventional bed, said opening of said storage box

being located adjacent [a] one of said side panel sections of said at least one side of said conventional bed,

at least one portion of an overall length of said one of said [a] side panel sections adjacent said storage box being hinged, whereby said hinged portion of said one of said side panel sections can be moved outward to expose an interior of said storage box via said opening in said storage box and moved inwardly to cover said opening and thus the interior of said storage box, without substantially altering the height of and the external appearance of said [overall] one side panel section of said conventional bed, and a lock/latch mechanism mounted to releasably secure said at least one hinged portion of said one side panel section.

Claim 36, line 2, before "includes" insert --further--.

Claim 38, amend to read as follows:

38. (Amended) ~~The hidden storage system of Claim 35, wherein~~  
each side of said <sup>conventional</sup> bed is provided with one said [a] storage box [having an opening therein] positioned adjacent each of said [a] side panel sections of said ~~bed~~ and wherein at least one portion of an overall length of both said side [panels] panel sections adjacent said storage boxes are hinged portions of said side panel sections expose or cover the interior of said storage boxes, and ~~lock~~ mechanisms for securing each of said hinged portions of said side [panels] panel sections.

Claim 40, amend to read as follows:

40. ~~Amended~~ The hidden storage system of Claim 35, wherein the at least one hinged portion of [the] said one of said side panel sections has a length of substantially the overall length of said one of said side panel sections, and is hinged horizontally at an upper end section thereof, whereby outward movement of said hinged portion of said one of said side panel sections raises said portion to expose the interior of said storage box along substantially an exterior length of said storage box.

CS8 Claim 41, line 3, change "side panel" to read --one of said side panel sections--.

Claim 42, line 1, after "said" insert --one of said--;  
line 2, after "panel" insert --sections--.

Please add the following claims:

Sub 43/ Sub 43/ 43. In a vehicle having contoured side panels, a hidden storage system comprising:

at least one hinged contoured side panel section in at least one of said side panels,

at least one storage box having an interior and an opening therein located adjacent said at least one hinged contoured side panel section, and

a lock/latch mechanism for said at least one hinged contoured side panel <sup>section</sup>,

said hidden storage system being constructed to not

substantially alter an external appearance of the contoured side panels of the vehicle.

44. The hidden storage system of Claim 43, wherein said at least one hinged contoured side panel section is hinged to open <sup>outwardly</sup> ~~upwardly or sideways~~.

45. ~~The hidden storage system of Claim 43, additionally including at least one strut assembly for maintaining said at least one hinged contoured side panel section in an open position, said at least one strut assembly being provided with means selected from <sup>one of</sup> the group <sup>of means</sup> consisting of insulating means, heating means, and heating and insulating means.~~

46. The hidden storage system of Claim 43, additionally including at least one drain/air relief valve assembly mounted in a bottom area of said at least one storage box.

47. The hidden storage system of Claim 43, wherein said vehicle includes at least one <sup>said</sup> hinged contoured side panel section in each of said contoured side panels, <sup>one said</sup> a storage box having an interior and an opening therein located adjacent, at least each of said hinged contoured side panel sections, and <sup>one said</sup> a lock/latch mechanism for each of said hinged contoured side panel sections.

48. The hidden storage system of Claim 47, wherein said vehicle includes a pickup bed having said contoured side panels, and wherein said storage boxes are located within said bed, and wherein access to said storage boxes in said bed is only available via at